

Church of the Immaculate Conception - Farm Street



Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
(Sexagesima Sunday)
7th February 2021

PARISH CLERGY

Fr Dominic Robinson SJ, Parish Priest
Fr Chris Pedley SJ; Fr Michael Holman SJ

REGULARLY ASSISTING CLERGY

Fr Damian Howard SJ; Fr Paul Nicholson SJ
Fr Adrian Porter SJ; Fr Laco Sulik SJ

PARISH STAFF

George McCombe, Parish Secretary
Email: farmstreetoffice@rcdow.org.uk
Tel: 07561 611 248

Patricia Morgan, Finance Officer
Email: farmstreetfin@rcdow.org.uk

David Graham, Director of Music
Email: farmstreetmusic@gmail.com

Leninha Assis, Catechist
Email: farmstcatechist@rcdow.org.uk

Kevin De Souza, Sacristan
Email: farmstreetsacristan@rcdow.org.uk

Sebastian Cichocki, Maintenance
Email: scichocki@jesuit.org.uk

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

Steven Fachada, farmstreetppcchair@rcdow.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Debbie Martin, farmstreetsg2@safeguardrcdow.org.uk

Parish Office

ADDRESS: 114 Mount Street, London, W1K 3AH
TELEPHONE: 020 7493 7811
E-MAIL: farmstreetoffice@rcdow.org.uk
WEBSITE: www.farmstreet.org.uk

MASS SCHEDULE

Monday to Friday: 10am & 6pm

Saturday: 10am & 6pm

Sunday: 11am (Latin) & 6pm

Due to the critical situation in London, all Masses will be celebrated behind locked doors until further notice. Mass can be viewed on our livestreaming page. <https://www.farmstreet.org.uk/livestream>

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Monday to Saturday: 11am to 4pm

Sunday: 12.30pm to 4pm

CONFESSIONS

By appointment.

BAPTISM AND WEDDINGS

By appointment. Dates are subject to lockdown developments.

CHURCH OPENING HOURS

Monday to Saturday: 11am to 5.30pm

Sunday: 12.30pm to 5.30pm

LONDON JESUIT CENTRE

All events are suspended until further notice. For more information, contact Anne Paolino at apaolino@jesuit.org.uk

Sunday Homilies & Articles Weekly newsletter articles are uploaded to our website on a weekly basis. They can be viewed at <https://www.farmstreet.org.uk/weekly-articles>. Our website also contains an archive of previous Sunday homilies.

Social Media

Farm Street Church has a strong presence on social media and we regularly update our Twitter account and Facebook page with information relating to the parish and the wider Catholic community.

THE MEANING OF LIFE

There is a cleaned up version of the story told by the comedians Peter Cook and Dudley Moore which goes: “I had that philosopher Bertrand Russell in the back of my cab and I said to him, “what is it all about then?”” and, would you believe it, he didn’t know”. Today’s readings raise that question. We see two very different answers to question of what life is about.

The first answer we get is suggested by Job in the first reading. On this view life is worthless, just drudgery. There is no point to it. Life is something to be endured. Perhaps there are times in our lives when we have felt like Job, times when it has been difficult to see purpose and meaning in our lives.

Our Gospel does not address the question directly but it paints a very different picture. It is full of life and enthusiasm. Jesus is extremely busy, preaching and curing the sick. At long last he is able to get some time before the day begins to go off and pray. When the disciples find him he tells them there is even more to do. “Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can preach there too, because that is why I came”. Jesus knows what his life is about and he is keen to carry out what he came to do. We see the same thing in St. Paul in the second reading from the letter to the Corinthians. He is called to preach the Gospel and that is what he must do. Job talks about life a meaningless slavery, but Paul says he has made himself a slave of everyone in order to win some for Christ.

The contrasting pictures lead us to ask what our lives are about. For many of our contemporaries life must ultimately seem like that of Job. If they are fortunate there may perhaps be distractions and enjoyments, but in the end, no real meaning. More positively, others are like Simon’s mother-in-law. She finds meaning for her life in serving others, especially her family. No sooner has she been cured of her than she gets busy preparing a meal for Simon and his friends. This way of finding meaning in service is much closer to Jesus and Paul. Worthwhile, though this is there is another step to finding true meaning. What is the meaning of our service, what lies behind it? There is something even beyond family ties. This comes from faith.

Sheer business can keep us going. That can be true in whatever we are doing. That is especially true when that business involves serving others. Even so, there is a danger we can fall in the Job’s way of thinking, even if our activity is of the most noble

kind. We can find ourselves asking, “What is the point?” Is that business really producing anything lasting?” A true sense of meaning comes from keeping our eyes fixed on God. Jesus decision to go on to the other towns after spending time in prayer to his Father. For Paul it is the mission he has received from God. When we feel life is pointless or that service is unfruitful we need to follow the example of Jesus. We need to take time to be with God, to renew that relationship which gives meaning to our lives and our service.

To return to the story, in practice, Bertrand Russell might well have said that the question was meaningless. That, however, depends on very a restricted view of meaning and this is not an article about linguistic philosophy.

Fr Chris Pedley SJ

Suspension of Public Worship

Following a consultation led by the Parish Pastoral Council we have decided that, in the interests of public safety and following the directive of both the Mayor of London and the Prime Minister that people stay at home and use public transport only for essential travel, public Masses will be suspended as of Friday 22nd January until the critical situation in London regarding the possibility of COVID and its new variants’ infection improves.

The church will now be open from 11am – 5:30pm (on Sunday from 12:30pm) with adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until 4pm. There will be two livestreamed Masses Monday to Saturday at 10am and 6pm (on Saturday the Vigil Mass of Sunday) and on Sunday 11am Solemn Latin and 6pm in English with music.

Many thanks for your understanding.

Face Covering Update

‘Face coverings will be mandatory in Places of Worship from Saturday 8th August 2020. All those who are attending churches must wear a face covering unless they are exempt from doing so. This is for the good of all who gather in the Church for Mass [or for private prayer] as it is an enclosed public space where there are people from differing households who they do not normally meet.’ (*Statement issued by the Bishops’ Conference*). Further information can be found on following link to the relevant section of the Government website

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

Liturgical Calendar

Sun: Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Mon: Feria; St Jerome Emiliani; St Josephine Bakhita
Tue: Feria
Wed: St Scholastica, Virgin
Thu: Feria; Our Lady of Lourdes
Fri: Feria
Sat: Feria; Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturday
Sun: Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Daily Bible Readings

Sun: Job 7:1-7; I Corinthians 9:16-23;
Mark 1:29-39
Mon: Genesis 1:1-19; Mark 6:53-56
Tue: Genesis 1:20-2:4; Mark 7:1-13
Wed: Genesis 2:4-17; Mark 7:14-23
Thu: Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 7:24-30
Fri: Genesis 3:1-8; Mark 7:31-37
Sat: Genesis 3:9-24; Mark 8:1-10
Sun: Leviticus 12:1-2, 44-46;
I Corinthians 10:31-11:1; Mark 1:40-45

Mass intention

If you would like a Mass to be celebrated for a specific intention, please contact the Parish Secretary at farmstreetoffice@rcdow.org.uk

Copenhagen Street Foodbank

Farm Street Church is collecting supplies for the Copenhagen Street Foodbank. This foodbank is an independent community set up with the support of Caritas Westminster, and operates on Thursday, 1pm to 3.30pm, in the Blessed Sacrament Church Hall in Copenhagen Street, N1 0SR. They are appealing for donations of non-perishable foods (such as pasta, rice, tinned food, biscuits etc), toiletries, household items (such as laundry liquid and detergent), feminine products, and baby supplies. If you would like to donate supplies, please them in bags inside the Farm Street entrance to the church.

The Pope's Monthly Prayer Intention

In the month of February, Pope Francis encourages us to pray for women suffering from violence. We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and their sufferings considered and heeded.

Cana Journey

Cana Journey is a new initiative which is designed around these challenging times of social restriction and home-working, and which promises support and enrichment for couples. Cana Journey is a dedicated YouTube channel that helps couples spend time listening and talking to each other to enrich, support, repair and strengthen their lives together. English speaking couples from Cana Canada, Ireland, UK and USA are delighted to present CANA@Home. Each couple will present the symbolism of our own homes as a focus for prayer and reflection over 6 broadcasts. The first opening is on Friday 29th January 8pm. The link is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yacBMtYjcKQ&feature=youtu.be>

Enterprising Catholics

Enterprising Catholics is an organization offering start-up advice and mentoring for Catholics considering setting up new enterprises (be they businesses, professional firms, social enterprises, or charities). It connects Catholics with other Catholics getting started ('mentees') or who have already founded such enterprises and want to share their experiences ('mentors'). If you are interested in volunteering as a mentor or mentee, please email: volunteer@enterprisingcatholics.org or visit: www.enterprisingcatholics.org

A Prayer if Anxious

*Do not look forward in fear to the changes in life;
rather, look to them with full hope that as they arise,
God, whose very own you are,
will lead you safely through all things;
and when you cannot stand it,
God will carry you in His arms.
Do not fear what may happen tomorrow;
the same understanding Father who cares for
you today will take care of you then and every day.
He will either shield you from suffering
or will give you unfailing strength to bear it.
Be at peace,
and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.
St Francis De Sales*

Scripture Speaks

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present
your requests to God. And the peace of God, which
transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts
and your minds in Christ Jesus".* Philippians 4:6-7

Young Catholic Lenten Retreat

Join like-minded people in the 18-30 age bracket who are motivated by social action and social justice with Caritas Westminster and Young Caritas Westminster. The 'Let Us Dream' Lenten Retreat is an opportunity to break open the themes discussed in the Pope's latest book, and to discover and share the things speaking to your heart this Lent.

Retreatants will attend three online sessions to share, grow, and discern together. Alongside this is the opportunity for one-to-one accompaniment provided by trained guides.

Retreatants will be provided with a pack, containing a copy of 'Let Us Dream' and notebook to write down your reflections.

Sessions will have spiritual input from the Jesuit Young Adult Ministry, Diocese of Westminster Youth Ministry and Young Caritas.

For more information and to book a place, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/young-caritas-let-us-dream-lenten-retreat-tickets-138923194013>

Society for Ecumenical Studies Talk

The Society for Ecumenical Studies is hosting an online seminar to mark the 850th anniversary of the murder of St Thomas Becket. The seminar is titled 'St Thomas Becket: An inspiration for the churches today?' and will take place via Zoom at 7.30pm on Tuesday 23rd February.

The keynote speaker is Professor Henry Mayr-Harting, Emeritus Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, University of Oxford. Responses by:

Revd. Dr. Keith Clements, former General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches who will reflect on Church-State relations;

and

Archbishop Angaelos, Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London who will speak about martyrdom today.

Chair: Fr. Dominic Robinson S.J., Vice-chair, SfES

To book, please go to <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/thomas-becket-an-inspiration-for-the-churches-today-tickets-139835701347>

For more information, please contact the secretary at sfes.secretary@gmail.com

Holy Land Pilgrimage

The Aid to the Church in Need's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land is due to take place between Friday 12 November and Saturday 20 November 2021. Pilgrims will not only visit Holy sites, but will have the chance to visit ACN projects, as well as meeting with local Church leaders and Christian families.

The pilgrimage will be led by Father Dominic Robinson SJ, ACN UK's National Ecclesiastical Assistant and Neville Kyrke-Smith, National Director of ACN UK. The nine-day itinerary will take in locations of important religious and historical importance: Bethlehem, Mount of Olives, Mount Zion, Old City Jerusalem, Qumran, Dead Sea, Galilee, Cana, Nazareth and Tiberias. For more information, please visit <https://acnuk.org/event/aid-to-the-church-in-needs-pilgrimage-to-the-holy-land-2021/>

Act of Perfect Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against You, whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with Your help, to do penance, to sin no more, to avoid whatever leads me to sin, and to confess my sins when possible.

Act of Spiritual Communion

Jesus, I believe you are present in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You and draw closer to You. Since I cannot receive Your body and blood sacramentally at this time, come to me spiritually. Help me to embrace You more deeply and unite myself more wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from Your love. Amen

Supporting the Parish

We are grateful to everyone who has continued to financially support the church during the months of disruption caused by the pandemic. We are mindful that many people are currently struggling financially and may not be able to donate as they once did. If you can donate to the work of the parish, we would ask that you consider doing so in a way that avoids physical cash. This is for the safety of our staff, who need to physically count any money that is donated. Please consider donating via our website, setting up a standing order, or donating via the cashless terminals in the church. We are also implementing a new donating system called Givt, which will allow contactless donations via mobile phones. If you would like to donate via standing order, please contact the parish Finance Officer at farmstreetfin@rcdow.org.uk. Thank you again for your support.